

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 4, 5, 8-10, 14, 18, 21 and 22 are pending in this application, with Claims 4, 14, 18, 21 and 22 being independent. Claim 7 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 4, 14, and 18 have been amended, and Claims 21 and 22 have been added. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, at least at page 25, line 24 through page 26, line 24 of the specification, and in the corresponding drawings. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 4, 5, 7-10, 14 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,909,602 (Nakai et al.). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons presented below.

As recited in independent Claim 4, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of selection means for selecting at least one of a plurality of different discrimination processes based on an operation by a supervisor who inputs a password, and setting means for setting an order of the plurality of different discrimination processes selected by the selection means when the selection means selects more than one of the plurality of different discrimination processes based on the operation by the supervisor. With these features, one or more discrimination processes can be selected and the order in which they are performed can be set, which allows flexibility in balancing the reliability of discriminating a specific image with the effects of the discrimination processes on

processing speed. On the other hand, since this selection can be performed only by a supervisor who inputs a password, an ordinary user cannot alter the discrimination processes and their effects on the apparatus.

Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features of Claim 4. Nakai et al. discloses an apparatus that discriminates whether an input image is a copy-prohibited image (columns 31-36). That patent further discloses:

The finger print register screen includes two input areas for inputting a department code and an individual's name, respectively. As soon as the user inputs the department code and individual's name, the input data are displayed in their respective input areas.

Col. 12, lines 39-44. However, Applicant submits that Nakai et al. does not disclose or suggest at least the feature of selecting at least one of a plurality of different discrimination processes based on an operation by a supervisor who inputs a password. In particular, nothing in Nakai et al. either discloses or suggests that only a supervisor can input a password and select discrimination processes.

Further, Applicant submits that Nakai et al. also fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature of setting means for setting an order of the plurality of different discrimination processes when more than one is selected based on the operation by the supervisor.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the present invention recited in independent Claim 4 is patentable over the cited art. Independent Claims 14 and 18 recite similar features and are believed patentable for reasons similar to Claim 4.

The dependent claims are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Regarding new Claims 21 and 22, Applicant submits that those claims are patentable over the cited art at least because they recite, among others, the feature of selecting at least one of a plurality of different discrimination processes based on an operation by a supervisor who inputs a password. As discussed above, Applicant submits that the cited art does not disclose or suggest at least this feature.

In view of the foregoing amendment, Applicant submits that all pending claims should be allowed and the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration , withdrawal of the outstanding rejection, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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